

Message Text

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BELGRADE FOR USDEL CSCE

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OTRA, UR, US, CSCE

SUBJECT: SOVIET TRAVEL REGULATIONS REVISED

REF: A. MOSCOW 628, B. MOSCOW 611, C. MOSCOW 563,
D. 76 STATE 81875, E. 74 MOSCOW 2362

1. DEPARTMENT IS IN PROCESS OF STUDYING NEW SOVIET TRAVEL
REGULATIONS. WE WILL DO A MAP AND STATISTICAL ANALYSIS TO
DETERMINE EXTENT AND PRACTICAL EFFECT OF CHANGES BEFORE
DECIDING HOW BEST TO RESPOND. SHOULD BE NOTED THAT SOVIETS
DID NOT RPT NOT RESPOND TO US UNILATERAL OPENING OF
TEMPORARILY CLOSED AREAS IN APRIL 1976 (REF D), AN ACTION
WE TOLD THEM WAS BEING TAKEN IN CONSIDERATION OF CSCE PRO-
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VISIONS AND IN ORDER TO MOVE TOWARD RECIPROCAL RELAXATION
OF TRAVEL CONTROLS. NEW SOVIET REGULATIONS MAY, IN PART,
BE RELATED TO OUR EARLIER MOVE. WE AGREE THAT FURTHER
RELAXATION IN US CONTROLS MAY BE WARRANTED, BUT CONSIDER
IT UNLIKELY THAT SOVIETS WOULD BE WILLING, OR ABLE TO GO
MUCH FURTHER VERY SOON SINCE PRESENT LIBERALIZATION IS
PROBABLY RESULT OF MAJOR COORDINATING AND CLEARING EXERCISE

WITHIN SOVIET BUREAUCRACY.

2. RE REF A, WE REGULARLY GIVE TO SOVIET EMBASSY AND OTHER SOVIET ESTABLISHMENTS IN US COPIES OF US CLOSED AREA MAPS. IN FACT, WE SOMETIMES GIVE THEM COPIES OF OUR MAPS SHOWING CLOSED AREAS IN THEIR OWN COUNTRY. EMBASSY IS AUTHORIZED TO ASK MFA FOR SOVIET CLOSED AREA MAP ON BASIS OF RECIPROCITY.

3. COULD EMBASSY CLEAR UP FOLLOWING POINT: SOVIET NOTE OF FEBRUARY 18, 1974 (REFTEL E), PROVIDES FOR NOTE-FREE TRAVEL BY EMBASSY PERSONNEL TO "OPEN TOWNS AND AREAS OF THE MOSCOW OBLAST." THIS WOULD INDICATE THAT FOURTEEN NEW OPEN AREAS IN MOSCOW OBLAST (REFTEL B) COULD BE TRAVELED TO WITHOUT NOTIFICATION TO MFA. CAN EMBASSY CONFIRM THIS WITH MFA?

4. DURING OUR CONSIDERATION OF RECIPROCITY ISSUE IT WILL BE USEFUL TO HAVE REGULAR REPORTING OF PRACTICAL EFFECT OF NEW REGULATIONS. IN ADDITION TO MONTHLY TRAVEL REPORTS, EMBASSY AND CONGEN REQUESTED TO KEEP DEPARTMENT INFORMED OF TRAVEL APPROVED OR REFUSED TO NEWLY OPENED AREAS AND CITIES. WOULD ALSO APPRECIATE ANY INFORMATION EMBASSY IS ABLE TO DEVELOP ON TRAVEL BY FOREIGN PRIVATE TRAVELERS TO THESE AREAS. (IT STRIKES US THAT NEW REGULATIONS MAY BE OF MAJOR BENEFIT TO AMERICAN CITIZENS SEEKING TO VISIT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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THEIR RELATIVES IN SOME OF THESE FORMERLY CLOSED AREAS, PARTICULARLY IN BALTIC STATES.)

5. DEPARTMENT WOULD APPRECIATE EMBASSY'S SUGGESTIONS AND VIEWS ON SUBSTANCE AND TIMING OF POSSIBLE RECIPROCAL MOVE BY US.

6. FOR BELGRADE USDEL CSCE, REFTELS A, B AND C BEING REPEATED TO YOU FYI. VANCE

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